Amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 will have to be considered at the appropriate time.

(b) Developed countries like Japan and South Korea are pursuing a large nuclear power programme. In USA and Western Europe, however, its growth has slowed down mainly due to saturation in demand for energy and energy conservation measures. Nuclear power capacity in the world is growing particularly in the countries of the Asian Region.

(c) The cost of generation of electricity from nuclear power plants in India is comparable to the cost of generation from coal-thermal stations located at about 1000-1200 Km. from coal pit-heads. The cost of generation from nuclear plants is expected to be increasingly competitive with that from thermal plants over the plant life time due to substantially lower fuelling costs. The cost of hydel generation is lower than nuclear and thermal generation.

(d) Foreign investment in nuclear power sector may facilitate introduction of new technologies other than PHWR technology and allow the possibility of overseas funding in this area.

Expandable Housing Scheme

1772. DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether DDA has invited applications for allotment of houses under "Expandable Housing Scheme, 1996; and

(b) if so, when the draw for allotment of these houses are likely to take place ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Delhi Development Authority has reported that draw of lots for allotment of houses under Expandable Housing Scheme, 1996, is expected to take place in March, 1997.

[Translation]

Nuclear Power Programme

1773. SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have chalked out any new nuclear power programme to increase the established capacity of nuclear power in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which its implementation is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) The proposals for Ninth Five Year Plan 1997-2002, envisage commencement of construction of two units of 500 MWe of Tarapur-3 & 4, two units of 220 MWe of Kaiga-3&4 besides the Kudankulam (2 X 1000 MWe) project in technical cooperation with Russian Federation. Towards the end of the Ninth Plan period preliminary work on one 500 MWe Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) is also proposed to be commenced. 300 MWe capacity of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS-1&2) presently under capital maintenance is expected to be brought back into operation during 1997-98. 880 MWe of new generating capacity consisting of two units each of 220 MWe at Kaiga in Karnataka and Rewatbhata in Rajasthan, are expected to be commissioned during 1998-99.

[English]

Price of Cooking Gas

1774. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :
SHRI DINSHA PATEL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the price of cooking gas for commercial use has been fixed by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received representations from the commercial users all over the country for review of its decision; and

(d) if so, whether the Government are considering to lower the prices following resentment for the commercial users of cooking gas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (c) The price of cooking gas (LPG) for commercial use is fixed on import parity basis. The recent increase in the price of LPG for commercial use is due to hardening of the prices of LPG in the international market.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration.

Power Plant

1775. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the proposal for setting up a 500 MW Power Plant by the Cochin Refineries has been pending